

Thomas Edward.



DEATH OF THOMAS EDWARD.  
*Standard April 28/1884*

Thomas Edward, the Banff Naturalist, who attained a wide fame through the story of his life written by Mr. Smiles, died yesterday after a prolonged illness. Edward was born on Christmas-day, 1814, at Gosport, Portsmouth, where his father, a private in the Fife Militia, was stationed after returning from the Peninsular War. The elder Edward, who was a handloom weaver, subsequently settled in Aberdeen. Early in life Thomas showed indications of a great love of animals, insects, and creatures of every description. He made extensive excursions in search of specimens, and many amusing anecdotes are told to illustrate his extreme

*Your most affectionately*

*Thomas Edward*

*Banff*

*To Mrs. L. Ellis*

ledge. When he married, at 20, his wages were but 10s. a week, and he had to work till late all the year round; but he often spent nights in the fields and caves, searching for insects and strange flowers. For 15 years Edward carried on most of his researches by night, and he had many narrow escapes through the eagerness with which he pursued his object. He completed a splendid collection, and in 1846 exhibited it in Aberdeen. The Exhibition was a failure, and he had to sell the collection for 20% to defray the expenses. He set to work to form another collection, and was most successful. His researches added greatly to the knowledge of Natural History, as he embodied the new facts in papers written to scientific magazines. In 1866 Edward was elected a member of several leading scientific societies. Latterly he has acted as curator of Banff Museum. After the publication of his biography by Mr. Smiles Edward's genius was publicly recognised by a presentation of 333% made to him in Aberdeen, and he was awarded by the Queen a pension of 50% a year.

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Thomas Edward, the Banff Naturalist, who attained a wide fame through the story of his life written by Mr. Smiles, died yesterday after a prolonged illness. Edward was born on Christmas-day, 1814, at Gosport, Portsmouth, where his father, a private in the Fifeshire Militia, was stationed after returning from the Peninsular War. The elder Edward, who was a handloom weaver, subsequently settled in Aberdeen. Early in life Thomas showed indications of a great love of animals, insects, and creatures of every description. He made extensive excursions in search of specimens, and many amusing anecdotes are told to illustrate his extreme fondness for even the most repulsive subjects in the animal creation. To his mother he was a source of constant trouble, for she disliked many of the creatures with which the boy constantly came home, in his pockets, in his cap, or concealed about his body. On one occasion he took off his shirt to wrap a bee's "byke" in it. Edward was an unmanageable boy, with no love of books. He had been discharged from three schools before he was six years old, partly on account of a habit of playing truant, and partly because he alarmed his fellow-scholars by bringing jackdaws, worms, and beetles into school with him. Edward was sent to work at a tobacco factory at the age of six, and subsequently to Grandholm Wool Mill. He had there the opportunity to indulge to the full his love of natural objects. At eleven he was apprenticed to a shoemaker, and at the age of eighteen he had gone through many severe trials. He joined the Militia, but his love of insects proved fatal to his military ambition. When at drill one day a butterfly fluttered past, and Edward, forgetting discipline, broke from the ranks, pursued and captured the insect. He was brought back a prisoner and subsequently discharged. In his twentieth year Edward went to work as a shoemaker, at Banff, and there he pursued so successfully his researches in natural history, that he added a great deal to the scientific store of knowledge. When he married, at 23, his wages were 9s. 6d. a week, and he had to work till late all the year round; but he often spent nights in the fields and caves, searching for insects and strange flowers. For 15 years Edward carried on most of his researches by night, and he had many narrow escapes through the eagerness with which he pursued his object. He completed a splendid collection, and in 1846 exhibited it in Aberdeen. The Exhibition was a failure, and he had to sell the collection for 20% to defray the expenses. He set to work to form another collection, and was most successful. His researches added greatly to the knowledge of Natural History, as he embodied the new facts in papers written to scientific magazines. In 1866 Edward was elected a member of several leading scientific societies. Latterly he has acted as curator of Banff Museum. After the publication of his biography by Mr. Smiles Edward's genius was publicly recognised by a presentation of 333% made to him in Aberdeen, and he was awarded by the Queen a pension of 50% a year.

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